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## CRITICAL NOTICES.

## Duhm's Commentary on Isaiah.

*Handkommentar zum Alten Testament, herausgegeben von W. NOWACK.*

*Das Buch Jesaia, übersetzt und erklärt. Von BERNH. DUH*  
*Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht. 1892.*

Two eminent men from Ewald's university have been powerful instruments in breaking up the critical theory of the course of Israelitish development to which Ewald himself adhered—Julius Wellhausen and Bernhard Duhm. Of the former it is needless to speak; Scottish enterprise and skill have made his book familiar to all our really advanced students. To the latter, attention was perhaps first called in England (subsequently to my own notice of his early work in the *Academy* for December 25th, 1875) by the translation of Kuenen's historical survey of recent literature on the Hexateuch, which Mr. Wicksteed prefixed to his English version of Vol. I. of the *Onderzoek* (1886). Duhm was in fact the first scholar to treat in detail of the religious ideas of the prophets from the point of view of the "Graffian" hypothesis, and the independent confirmation which his prophetic studies brought to that hypothesis can hardly be overrated. He now comes before us with a commentary on the Book of Isaiah, accompanied by a translation which pre-supposes a thorough revision of the text, and it should be a matter of the highest interest to ascertain how this clear-headed and original student has been developing during his seventeen years of silence. One thing, at any rate, is clear—that the present work was not merely produced to order, as one of a new series of students' "hand-commentaries." It is really far too good for a hand-book; it must have been only a happy coincidence that Professor Nowack, the editor of the new series, wanted a volume on Isaiah, and that Professor Duhm was far advanced with a long-planned commentary on this Old Testament book. I cannot, indeed, echo the criticism of an excellent Scottish scholar (Professor G. A. Smith in the *Expositor*), that Duhm has misapprehended the object of the series, which is "to bring readers abreast of the main positions of Old Testament science," for, as I at least read the programme, the object is rather to introduce students to the present position of the problems of criticism and exegesis,

regardless of the fact that in doing so it will often be necessary to oppose "generally received opinions." But it certainly is obvious that the working clergy, in whose interests the series is mainly projected, will need to supplement Duhm's work by a commentary such as Dillmann's or Delitzsch's, in which the critical theories which have until lately been considered satisfactory are sufficiently expounded.

There is enough in this volume to occupy several reviewers, nor can I hope to do more in the present article than show cause why students should slowly read and ponder the contents of a remarkable work. Both in the higher and in the lower criticism, both in grammatical exegesis, and in the treatment of the prophetic ideas, there is very much which will fascinate a prepared reader, and even those who are most suspicious of novelties will not be able to part from this book without a deep sense of gratitude. The progress that the author has made is, indeed, noteworthy. In his early work it was not clear that his linguistic was equal to his historical and philosophical capacity ; but in the *Isaiah*, though linguistics are not so prominent as in Baethgen's book on the Psalms, one cannot say that there are traces of haste in the philology. In other respects the qualities of this book are just what we might expect from the *Theologie der Propheten*, except that the critical insight has become immensely deeper. Among these qualities there is only one which I very earnestly regret, viz., the aggressive tone of many passages of the book. To attack generally received opinions is always difficult ; why increase the difficulty by irritating personalities ? To which probably Duhm's answer is, that the opinions which he attacks are, to a great extent, accepted blindly from favourite teachers, that these teachers must be freely criticised, and that he himself is willing to have the same measure meted out to him. The answer seems to me insufficient, and I much prefer the tone of another free critic, who anticipated in some respects the *Richtung* of the newer criticism, and who, like Duhm, was exiled to the German-Swiss university of Basel—W. M. L. de Wette.

I shall venture now to give a selection from the marked passages in my copy of Duhm, reserving my criticism of his well thought out hypotheses for another occasion. In the very first chapter one sees how his fine sense of metre (or, if you prefer, call it rhythm) assists him in the correction of the text, though here, it is true, he has had good predecessors. I think, however, that he presses metre too far when he transfers "your hands are full of blood" from verse 15 to verse 16. It appears to me that a long stichus not unfrequently closes a section, and that the poet-prophets often weary of a prolonged adherence to metre. i. 12 : I accept Duhm's arrangement,

but think with Oort that 'ז is more naturally rendered "that"; we thus get, "That ye should come to see my face, who hath required this at your hand?" i. 9: excellent note on Sodom and Gomorrah. ii. 2: Duhm combines the readings of the Hebrew and the Sept. text. I cannot follow him; the metre gains, but not the sense; metre begins, I think, at "Come, let us go up." Observe: Duhm defends the Isaianic origin of ii. 2-4, which he thinks the prophet wrote in extreme old age (with xi. 1-8, and xxii. 1-5). I cannot as yet say that his arguments convince me. In the *Thcol. der Proph.* (p. 162) he regarded it as a passage from an unknown author, and observed, "It influences the prophet but little." ii. 9: D. rightly questions the correctness of the text. ii. 10: Metre guides D. aright, when he declines to render "go into the rocks" (cf. Winckler, *A.T. Untersuchungen*, p. 176). On ii. 11-17 see an important metrical observation. ii. 18, 19: The former verse is a fragment; verse 20 is a late writer's attempt to reproduce the probable contents of the illegible passage; one manuscript gave the fragment, another the substituted verse. Verses 19 and 21 are the same passage in different forms; one is quite enough. For the initial ל in לְבָנָי (verse 21), the editor is responsible, according to Duhm. ii. 9: D. ably defends the Targumic interpretation, "their respect of persons"; he rejects "as (at) Sodom" as a gloss. iii. 13: good note on נִי. iii. 18-23, and 25, 26: two later insertions. On the former, Dr. J. P. Peters has independently expressed nearly the same view (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1892). Clearly Duhm is right; iv. 1, should follow iii. 24. On iv. 2-5, Duhm has an important new theory. The whole passage, he thinks, is an early editorial supplement. In verse 5 he reads נִבְנָה (Sept. καὶ ἡγέτη), and the enigmatical words "for over all glory is a canopy" are a gloss, presupposing the idea that Israel is Yahvè's bride. Verse 6 should open thus, "And he (Yahvè) shall be for a shadow," etc. I cannot doubt that the latter view is correct, though in verse 5 I would rather retain נִבְנָה, which is a simpler reading, and harmonises well with the specially strong post-Exilic colouring of verses 5 and 6. On the whole, indeed, I adhere to the view that there is an Isaianic basis to verses 2-4, though an editor may have worked it up into its present form; the reference to the women in verse 4 may be held to confirm this. But verses 5 and 6 are of course (as Stade saw) post-Exilic. In chapter v., D. is perhaps rather too quick to assume a mutilation of stanzas; may not one or two stanzas have contained several "woes"? I doubt, moreover, whether verses 14 and 17 are a fragment of a woe upon Jerusalem. Surely this would be a strange position for such a woe. Verse 14 seems to me to come in well after verse 13, exile being viewed as equivalent to death. But D. is undoubtedly

right in treating verses 15 and 16 as an insertion from the margin. Chapter v. 30, is a marginal gloss suggested by viii. 22 ; the last word in it is, of course, corrupt. vi. 13, the closing words are an interpolation. "To me this vision appears much grander and (psychologically) much truer, if it presents only the one image of the people persistently rushing to destruction." "The 'eternal hope' does not come short, when we hear Isaiah positively declaring that the present form of religion in its entirety has to be removed." I hope I am not too uncritical in regarding the last words as a modification due to Isaiah himself. vii. 14: "The young woman"=any young woman. Those who become mothers on the day when the Syrians evacuate the country will be impelled to name their children "God with us"; such children will be signs to the "House of David" of Isaiah's prophetic veracity, and of their own culpable unbelief. vii. 15, 17 are later insertions (Budde and Kuenen, with less probability, put aside verse 16); verses 21-25, in their present form, record the hand of the editor. Thus throughout this chapter Duhm happily corrects and expands the suggestions of his predecessors. On viii. 6 and xxviii. 16 Duhm seems to me right, against Driver and many other critics; Yahvè, and not the Davidic dynasty, is referred to. viii. 8 : D. points out a lacuna between verse 8a and 8b, and inserts "for" before **אָלָעָמָנָה**. The gain is obvious, but if we admit the lacuna, why may we not retain "thy land"? viii. 12 : Duhm retains **רָגִים**, and in verse 13 actually reads **רָגִים**, and renders "Yahvè of Hosts—make him a conspirator." A revelation introduced with such solemnity ought to contain a new idea, expressed in an original form. Chap. viii., as it were, pictures the conspiracy taking shape. The directors of events are not Ahaz, Rezin, Pekah, Tiglath Pileser, but Yahvè. Striking as this view is, I cannot accept it as a whole, the expression is too daring, and the hifil form occurs nowhere else. But one may, perhaps, accept the general idea. The plausible emendation **לְמִלְחָמָה** (verse 12a) is opposed by Sept.'s *στρατηγον* (**שָׁמַךְ**), as Dillmann has pointed out, and weakens the thought. ix. 5 : Honorific names which the king will gain by the success of his reign. But why not accession-names? "The government comes upon his shoulder," and then the king receives two composite *prophetic* names (cf. Ps. lxxii., if this be really an accession-psalm). Observe in passing that our ingenious critic finds two allusions to ix. 1-6, in writings inserted later in the Book of Isaiah. One is in xxvi. 15a, which he regards as an allusion to the well-known faulty reading of ix. 2a (which must therefore have arisen very early); the other in xxxiii. 23, where the rare word **מְרֻבָּה** comes from ix. 6 (and, I presume, **לִי** "booty," from ix. 5, where Duhm renders "father of booty"). ix. 18 : "and the people

becometh like cannibals" (cf. Hos. vii. 7) ; very strange. x. 4 : Duhm argues ably for Lagarde's well-known correction, and shows that v. 4b is not out of connexion with v. 4a on his hypothesis. That the present text is incorrect, I can now see ; but I do not venture to follow Lagarde and Duhm. Why did not the latter compare Amos v. 26, where the Northern Israelites of the eighth century appear to be charged with the worship of Assyrio-Babylonian deities ? The rest of chapter x. is brilliantly analysed, but I hesitate to accept the analysis quite as it stands. I admit that verse 23 is a quotation from xxviii. 22, and also that the passage, verses 20-22, may not have preserved its original form (it is for the most part unrhythymical), but I should allow an Isaianic basis of the latter passage. Duhm boldly says of verse 22b, "apparently a quotation." Is it not really a piece of the Isaianic original of verses 20-22 ? That נְשָׁבֵן in verse 20 means the Jews of the Diaspora is, at any rate, not a necessary view, and that the whole passage belongs to the second century B.C., and is a prophecy of the conversion of those Jews to stricter religious views, is nothing less than startling (temporal דָנָן with the imperfect ?). Observe, too, that the other (late) passages, in which the figure of the sand appears, pre-suppose that an overflowing population of Israelites will, in the main, be God-fearing (so, e.g., xlviii. 22) ; in x. 22, however, this is by no means taken for granted. Duhm would reply by pointing to the difference between the sixth century and the second. For my own part, I prefer to account for the phenomenon by the difference between the eighth century and the sixth. And even if the figure of the sand should be due to a later writer, we surely need not make him as late as the second century. The phenomena which seem to justify such a late date elsewhere (at any rate, in xix. 18-25) are wanting here. I venture, therefore, while fully acknowledging the intricacy of the question, to claim the thoughts, and to some extent, the expressions of the passage for Isaiah, and I account for verse 22, with Giesebrécht, as a modification introduced by Isaiah into a too consolatory prophecy ; verse 23 I give up as a later insertion from xxviii. 22. Nowhere indeed is it more difficult to take Duhm's views *en masse*. Must one really condemn verses 33 and 34, and leave xi. 1-8 hanging in the air ? "If Isaiah really wrote xi. 1-10," says Duhm, "they belong, beyond doubt, to his extreme old age, when he had already found out Manasseh's true character." I confess I do not believe in these "swan-songs" ; certainly there is no trace of old age in the style of this passage. xiv. 1-23, I am glad to find that Duhm, independently of me, has arrived at the conclusion that xiv. 4b-21 was not originally united to xiii. 2-22. Glad also to be able to learn from Duhm on the arrange-

ment and correction of the text. Certainty is, of course, unattainable ; but, after considering all the other recent proposals, and after hearing all the counsels of inborn English caution, I can only conclude that if Duhm's edition of the fourth and fifth strophes is not correct, it deserves a better fate. So far as I can see, it is in a high degree probable. This is what this skilful critic makes of the passage (the form of words adopted is, of course, my own) :—

## IV.

They that see thee, fix their gaze on thee, and consider thee,—  
 “ Is this the man that stirred the earth, that startled the kingdoms,  
 That made the world as the desert, and brake down its cities,  
 That sent not home free his prisoners, all the kings of the nations ?  
 (As for them) they all repose in honour, each one in his house,  
 But *thou* art flung down among the slain, (among) the pierced with  
 the sword,  
 Going down to the stones of the pit, as a trampled carcase.

## V.

[How art thou cut off] from thy grave, as an abhorred scion,  
 • • • • • clothed [with shame] !  
 [As for thy fathers], thou mayest not be joined with them in burial,  
 Because thou hast destroyed thy land, slain thy people.  
 Nevermore be named the seed of the evil-doer !  
 Prepare shambles for his sons, for the guilt of their father,  
 That they arise not, and take the earth in possession, and fill the face  
 of the world.

The transference of some words from the fourth to the fifth strophe needs no justification. The principal changes of reading are בְּבָרְגִּינִים for בְּבָרְגִּינִּים (cf. Sept. *εν τοῖς ὄρεσιν*), יְרָדֵד for מִרְעָדֵד, יְרָדֵד, for בְּבָרְגִּינִים. The last of these seems to me unnecessary. The weak points of the remodelled passage are the transition from line 4 to line 5, and the bold interpretation which has to be given to “ Going down to the stones of the pit,” in line 7 of strophe 4. But the transition can be justified. The imprisoned kings have been let loose, and the poet with imaginative freedom, sees them buried in glorious mausolea, while the dead body of the defeated King of Babylon, after being trampled upon, is flung down upon a heap of other corpses. And the best apology for the bold interpretation of “ Going down,” etc., would be to quote the explanations which have been given of the Massoretic text. Duhm thinks that “ the stones of the pit ” are the stones which were cast upon the dead body of a criminal (2 Sam. xviii. 17). This, in fact, has been already suggested by Delitzsch in explanation of the received text.

Let no one suppose that the value of Duhm's commentary stands or falls with his critical theories. For instance, I may agree with him that Isaiah xv. 1 to xvi. 11 is not an earlier prophecy which was adopted by Isaiah; but I need not join him in denying the epilogue (xvi. 13, 14) to Isaiah. Or I may accept his view that the epilogue is post-Exilic, and yet regard the preceding oracle (or poem) as written before the Exile. Certainly I am not disposed to move from the view which I have already mentioned in this REVIEW; Alexander Jannæus is not, in my opinion, referred to anywhere, either in psalm or prophecy. Or take another instance. I may agree with Duhm that it is not unnatural to explain xix. 1-4 of Artaxerxes Ochus, and may hold that the author of the appendix (verses 16 or 18-24) did so explain them. But I am not bound to adopt Duhm's theory that verses 1-15 were actually written in the time of that despot (see JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, July, 1892). And I am the less inclined to do so, because of the violent alterations which Duhm has had to make in a neighbouring chapter to make it suit this period. Not only does he almost entirely reconstruct xxiii. 2 and 3, and omit verse 5 and most of verse 13 as glosses, but he actually alters יְהֹוָה in verse 8 into יְהֹוָתָה, on the assumption that the original writer referred to the capture of Sidon by Artaxerxes Ochus, and that a later editor tried to adapt his work to the destruction of Tyre by Alexander the Great. His rendering of the supposed gloss in verse 13 is only too ingenious; סְפִינְתָּרִים="shipmen"—a rendering which is also given at lx. 9 with much more reason. There is also much that is startling in our critic's treatment of chaps. xxiv.-xxvii.; indeed, to say that xxv. 1-3 and xxvi. 5 refer to the destruction of Samaria by John Hyrcanus (between 113 and 105 B.C.) is a novelty which has serious consequences. And even the oldest portions of the writing are said to be not older than the beginning of the reign of John Hyrcanus. I hasten to add, however, that there is much suggestiveness in this part of Duhm's commentary. But here I must reluctantly break off. The second and larger half of the book has been untouched, and it is precisely here that Biblical theologians, as well as critics, have most to learn from this well thought-out and most original book. It will be a surprise to many to learn that Duhm supposes the hero of the Ebed-Yahvè-songs (xlvi. 1-4; xlii. 1-6; l. 4-9; lii. 13 - liii. 12) to be an (imagined) individual. These songs, he thinks, were of later origin than the work of the Second Isaiah, in which they have been inserted. Of course, there were other additions besides these; but into this very important question, ignored by most English scholars, I cannot now enter.

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